THE *Fantastic* letters come next in order, which I have drawn for you after the copy that I brought from Rome. Well I know that there are those who will make sport of them; but I shall patiently let them say what they will, contenting myself with taking pleasure in conferring an honourable service upon those who love good things. Even if there are some who decry them, good men will praise them & will esteem them no less for their antiquity than because I bring them before the public eye.

THE Egyptians in their ceremonies wrote in hieroglyphics, as the ancient author Orus Apollo* tells us at great length in Greek. We find the fact in Latin, too, and I have translated it into French to make a present of it to a nobleman & good friend of mine. The Egyptians, as I have said, wrote in hieroglyphics, to the end that the unlettered people could understand their ceremonies without having a profound knowledge of philosophy. For the works which they wrote were devised according to the nature of beasts, birds, fishes, insects, and a thousand other like things, as you can easily and abundantly read in the said Orus Apollo. I have seen some of these hieroglyphics in Rome in a porphyry in the great square in front of Notre Dame la Ronde, and on an obelisk and pyramid which stands near the church of the Cordeliers, in Ara Cœli, near the Capitol, and on another obelisk near La Minerve; also in a house near the Palace of Mount Jordan where there is painted an ox's head with two horns and a frog hanging to the two horns, and above it an eye; & next that a kettle full of fire, a man's face, a vessel from which water is flowing, violets in a jar, an eye over a shoe, a ship's anchor, a crane holding a stone with one of her feet, and a dolphin on a lamp which is held by a hand. In this fashion, as I have said, the Egyptians wrote hieroglyphics, as you can see and understand in the works of the above-quoted Orus Apollo, who says at the beginning of his work: *Ævum significantes, Solem & Lunam describunt, eo qui sint hi Planetæ ævi elementa. Ævum aliter scribere volentes, Serpentem pingunt caudam reliquo corpore tegentem, eum vocant Ægyptij Vreum, id est Basiliscum; quo quidem aureo formato Deos circundant. Ævum autem dicunt Ægyptij per hoc animal significari, quem cum sint tria genera serpentum, cætera quidem moriuntur; hoc solum est immortale. Hoc & quodlibet aliud animal solo sputum afflans absque morsu interimit. Unde cum vitæ et necis potestatem habere videatur, propter hoc ipsum Deorum capiti imponunt.* The

* *See Note 50.*